

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 00196 01 OF 02 140946Z

12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02

OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 MC-02 ACDA-05

IO-11 /120 W

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R 131739Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7405

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 0196

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR MO SS SP MR AG FR

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN PRIME MINISTER VISITS PARIS

REF: RABAT 0058

1. SUMMARY: PRIMIN OSMAN'S VISIT TO PARIS HAS BEEN TREATED AS GREAT SUCCESS IN RABAT AND SEEMS TO BE SOLID PREPARATION FOR VISIT TO FRANCE BY KING IN APRIL. EXCELLENCE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND FRENCH PRIMACY IN MOROCCO STRESSED BY BOTH SIDES, ALTHOUGH MOROCCANS SEEKING REDRESS OF TRADE BALANCE AND GUARANTEES FOR WORKERS IN FRANCE (SEPTTEL). IN ADDITION TO COMMENTING EXTENSIVELY ON SAHARA WHILE IN PARIS, OSMAN DECLARED NO "US TROOPS" PRESENT IN MOROCCO AND REFUSED TO
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PAGE 02 RABAT 00196 01 OF 02 140946Z

ADMIT ARMS PURCHASES FROM FRANCE. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIMIN OSMAN'S SIX-DAY (THREE OFFICIAL, THREE PRIVATE) VISIT TO PARIS JAN 7-12 HAS BEEN TREATED AS GREAT SUCCESS IN RABAT. THERE WILL, JUDGING FROM PUBLIC STATEMENTS, BE LITTLE TO CLOUD ATMOSPHERE DURING KING HASSAN'S PROJECTED OFFICIAL VISIT TO FRANCE, WHICH OSMAN TOLD PRESS WOULD TAKE PLACE AT END OF FIRST WEEK OF APRIL. OSMAN'S EXTENSIVE SAHARA REMARKS, STRESSING GRATITUDE FOR FRENCH ROLE, MOROCCAN CONFIDENCE AND COMMITMENT TO PEACE, REPORTED SEPTELS.

3. BILATERAL ASPECTS: DESCRIBING FRANCO-MOROCCAN RELATIONS, FRENCH PRIMIN CHIRAC SET TONE FOR VISIT ON OSMAN'S ARRIVAL WITH WORDS, "ALL IS FOR THE BEST IN THE BEST OF ALL WORLDS". THEMES OF "EXEMPLARY RELATIONS" AND "NO PROBLEMS" WERE SOUNDED BY BOTH SIDES THROUGHOUT AND ECHOED IN SEMI-OFFICIAL MEDIA COMMENTARY HERE. LATTER DESCRIBED RECENT BILATERAL DEVELOPMENTS AS "NEW DEPARTURE" AND PROFESSED TO DETECT "ATMOSPHERE OF GENUINE FRIENDSHIP", WITH FUTURE ASSURED BECAUSE BOTH COUNTRIES KNOW THEY CAN COUNT ON ONE ANOTHER. IF ANY SERIOUS POLITICAL DIFFERENCES REMAIN, THERE WAS NO HINT OF THEM IN MEDIA COVERAGE OR COMMENTARY.

4. FOR MOMENT, ALL SEEMS WELL ON ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT FRONTS TOO. OSMAN TOLD FRENCH TV MOROCCO WANTS FRANCE TO BE FOREMOST FOREIGN INVESTOR. (COMMENT: THIS POSSIBLY TO FLATTER FRENCH AND ATTRACT INVESTMENT AT TIME OF PARTICULAR NEED FOR FOREIGN CAPITAL FROM ALL SOURCES. MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE CONSISTENTLY PORTRAYED MOROCCANIZATION PROGRAM AND NEW INVESTMENT CODE TO US AS DELIBERATE EFFORT TO BREAK FRENCH INVESTMENT MONOPOLY IN FAVOR OF THIRD COUNTRIES, INCLUDING U.S. END COMMENT.) CHIRAC NOTED MOROCCO IS CHIEF GOF LOAN RECIPIENT, REVIEWED IMPORTANCE OF FRENCH DEVELOPMENT ROLE, AND EXPRESSED CERTAINTY THAT "PRIVILEGED PARTNERSHIP" OF TWO WOULD ENDURE. CHIRAC ALSO EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT EXODUS OF FRENCH CITIZENS FROM MOROCCO SEEMS OVER, NEARLY 53,000 REMAINING AFTER DEPARTURE OF 10,000 LAST YEAR.

5. OPPOSITION REACTION ALSO CONTINUED BASICALLY FAVORABLE THROUGHOUT. AUDIBLE GROUSING ON TRADE IMBALANCE AND EXPATRIATE
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PAGE 03 RABAT 00196 01 OF 02 140946Z

WORKERS' CONDITIONS (SEPTTEL) SEEMED TEMPERED BY OPTIMISM THAT ATMOSPHERE WAS FAVORABLE FOR FRENCH FORTHCOMINGNESS.

6. MULTILATERAL: MUTUAL PRAISE TYPIFIED REMARKS ON INTERNATIONAL MATTERS. CHIRAC SPOKE OF "PRECIOUS ORIGINALITY" OF GOM FOREIGN POLICY AND DESCRIBED MOROCCO AS DESTINED TO PLAY ROLE OF "HYPHEN" BETWEEN EUROPE AND AFRICA. OSMAN RECIPROCATED WITH SIMILAR LAURELS. HE WENT ON TO EVOKE GRANDLY THE KING'S

VIEW OF A FRANCO-HISPANO-MOROCCAN "AXIS" WHICH WOULD GIVE PRIORITY TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, WHERE "TENSIONS AND CONFRONTATIONS" ON THE RISE AND WHERE PRESENCE OF "OPPOSING FOREIGN FLEETS" HAS HELPED CREATE "CROSSROADS OF MENACE AND UNCERTAINTY". AT THE END OF OFFICIAL PORTION OF HIS VISIT, HOWEVER, OSMAN ADMITTED THAT "AXIS" AS SUCH NOT RAISED IN HIS TALKS WITH GISCARD.

7. ON ECONOMIC ASPECTS (SEPTTEL), OSMAN SAID MOROCCO CONVINCED THAT FRANCE WILL HELP MAGHREB ARRIVE AT FAVORABLE ASSOCIATION WITH EEC, WHICH MUST BE MORE FORTHCOMING WITH THIRD WORLD AND ARABS IN PARTICULAR. HE ALSO CALLED FOR NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC "EQUILIBRIUM" OF TECHNOLOGICAL SKILLS, FINANCIAL MEANS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, ADMITTING THIRD WORLD TO ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, JUST AS TO POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC.

8. U.S., FRENCH ARMS: IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY U.S. TV REPORTER, OSMAN REPORTEDLY ANSWERED THERE WERE NO REPEAT NO U.S. TROOPS IN MOROCCO. ASKED IF GOM WANTED ANY, HE REPLIED, "WHAT FOR?" OSMAN WAS ALSO ASKED IF FRANCE WAS ARMING MOROCCO, BUT HEDGED BY SAYING THAT HE WOULD NOT ADMIT IT EVEN IF TRUE. COMMENTED THAT IN ANY CASE, ALTHOUGH ARMS WERE AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE, GOM VIEW WAS THAT MOBILIZATION OF PUBLIC OPINION WAS BEST PROTECTION AND DETERRENT.
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PAGE 01 RABAT 00196 02 OF 02 140947Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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MC-02 /120 W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 RABAT 0196

9. MOROCCAN INTERNAL SCENE: GOM-OPPOSITION RELATIONS BRIEFLY RAISED IN PRESS QUESTIONING. OSMAN REPLIED THAT THESE RELATIONS WERE "MUCH MORE SERENE" NOW THAN SOME TIME AGO, AND SOUNDED OLD GOM THEME THAT SPECIAL COMPREHENSION EXISTS BETWEEN OPPOSITION AND GOVERNMENT IN MOROCCO. THEIR RELATIONS SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS "MANICHAEAN".

10. OSMAN HIMSELF AS A FACTOR IN SUCCESS OF TRIP ALSO A NOTICEABLE CURRENT IN SEMI-OFFICIAL PRESS. ALTHOUGH HE GENERALLY CONSIDERED HERE TO BE A BIT LIGHT, VISIT, AND HIS RECENT PROMINENCE IN SAHARA CAMPAIGN, SEEM TO HAVE GIVEN HIM ADDITIONAL PERSONAL STATURE. AT THIS POINT, HE WOULD APPEAR TO BE SLATED FOR LONG STINT AT THE TOP.

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PAGE 02 RABAT 00196 02 OF 02 140947Z

11. COMMENT: MOROCCANS SEEM CLEARLY TO HOPE OFFICIAL SEAL NOW FIRMLY PLACED ON PROCESS OF RAPPROACHEMENT AND THAT TONE OF FUTURE RELATIONS WELL DEFINED. FOREMOST POSITION OF FRANCE IN MOROCCO, ONCE AGAIN EMPHATICALLY REAFFIRMED, CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE EVEN MORE EVIDENT DURING KING'S PUTATIVE APRIL VISIT.

12. IT NOT CLEAR WHETHER GISCARD DISCREETLY DISCOURAGED, PERHAPS AS PREMATURE, SERIOUS TALK OF A FUTURE "AXIS" OR WHETHER KING HASSAN PREFERS TO MAKE PITCH PERSONALLY. GOM ATTEMPTING TO PREPARE FRENCH PSYCHOLOGICALLY, HOWEVER, AND WE WILL DOUBTLESSLY HEAR MORE.

13. REINFORCEMENT OF FRANCO-MOROCCAN RELATIONS PLANTS GOM'S FOOT IN WESTERN CAMP MORE FIRMLY THAN EVER AND MOROCCO'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS WITH FRANCE LIKELY TO FURTHER MOROCCAN INTERNAL STABILITY AND POLITICAL MODERATION. WHILE US-FRENCH COMMERCIAL COMPETITION CAN BE EXPECTED TO REMAIN SHARP FOR MOROCCAN MARKETS, POSITIVE TREND IN FRANCO-MOROCCAN RELATIONS IS, IN OUR VIEW, FULLY COMPATIBLE WITH CLOSE US-MOROCCAN RELATIONS AND SUPPORTIVE OF OVERALL U.S. STRATEGIC AND POLITICAL AIMS.

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